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Minutes of Dec. 7, 2009

ABAC Meeting Minutes for the meeting of December 7, 2009.

Board members present were Christopher Tonkin, Jeff Roth, Stephan Miller, Ron Sender and Ted Packard. Joey Glushko, Chad Gibson, Ed Starr and Michael (Mick) Beck were also present.

The meeting was called to order at 7:40.

Approval of the November minutes was tabled until the next meeting.

Traffic laws and enforcement—a request from the Board of Selectmen. We reviewed a letter sent to the Board of Selectmen by Mr. Bob Radochia. The letter complained about bicyclists disobeying traffic laws and town bylaws. Chad read the letter out loud for the benefit of those who did not have a copy. Mr. Radochia's letter was included with a request from the Selectmen to ABAC for recommendations for the initiation of a bicycle safety program. Ed suggested that we need to formulate a plan of work and then form a joint task group, with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), to fill in the plan. Ed suggested that there are a number of issues involved which might benefit from individual attention and pointed out that the Board of Selectmen has asked for a plan not a solution. Mick suggested that we reach out to Mr. Radochia and include him in the process.

Chad thought that this might be an opportunity to put some political pressure on the town to solve some of the more structural problems of bicycle accommodation. Ed reminded us that these issues will be difficult to solve and their resolution will take some time. There was a consensus among those present that we would like to work towards having bicyclists follow vehicular traffic laws. Jeff added that whatever we decide to do we have to keep the message simple for greater acceptance.

We distilled the issues discussed down to two tasks: Safety and improving the bike path crossing in Arlington Center. We voted to establish two joint task groups, with the TAC to formulate plans to address these problems.

*A vote was taken to establish two joint task groups with the TAC. All present were in favor.

Joey suggested that these task groups write letters to the Board of Selectmen explaining our short and long term recommendations to these problems. At this point, we spent some time discussing strategies and designs for the bikeway/center crossing. The Bicycle safety task group will include Chad, Ron and Scott. The Center crossing task group will include Stephan, Jeff, and Scott. All other interested ABAC members are invited to participate.

Fatal Accident on Route 2. Christopher suggested that we send the family of the deceased bicyclist a letter expressing our sorrow about his death and letting them know that we are working on improving bicycle safety in Arlington. Ted volunteered to get the police report and we will discuss this matter further at the next meeting when we have more information.

*The executive committee voted to draft the letter mentioned above. All the members present were in favor.

Planning for the Winter Social. We tried to define what we want out of the social and whether it has outlived its usefulness. We more or less decided that we liked the idea of a winter get-together and will proceed with the planning.

Joey reminded us about the presentation about Major Taylor that we have contemplated in the past. Ted will look into the Major Taylor idea and also suggested a talk by Richard Fries, the former publisher of The Ride magazine. Other ideas included talks on bicycling vacations, the six day races in New York and David Watson's talk on bicycle related laws in Massachusetts. This prompted Joey to suggest that we should invite the Arlington Police.

ABAC administrative updates: Mission statement, bylaws, committee structure and executive committee memberships. We discussed these issues at a task group meeting last week and Christopher is collating the changes we made. We will discuss the proposed changes at the next meeting.

MAPC project is seeking our input regarding bicycle accommodation. Joey gave us a summary of this project. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council is proposing laying out a bicycle route for viewing sites of historical interest in the area. Jeff thinks that bikes are the ideal way to view historical sites and that could be another impetus for improving bicycle accommodations in town.

The proposed route would trace the path of the Revolutionary War Battle Road through Arlington. Mick suggested a self guided tour, possibly via cell phone, would be an ideal guide for this kind of tour.

Posting to the Arlington Town Website. We need a place to publicly post our agendas and meeting minutes. Joey will look into the mechanics of posting these documents to the town website.

Tri-Community Bicycle Committee meeting. We agreed on the next Tri-Community meeting date which we will be hosting. The meeting will be at the time of our regularly scheduled April meeting, April 5.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30.

*Denotes a vote of the board was taken.

Minutes submitted by Stephan Miller